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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 5004th meeting of the Security Council, held on 15 July 2004, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council, taking note of the decision announced by the Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB) established by the Afghan authorities, welcomes and supports the holding of the Presidential election in Afghanistan on 9 October 2004. This election is a key requirement under the Bonn Agreement of December 2001 and represents a new milestone in the process of constructing a democratic, stable and prosperous Afghanistan.

"The Council further takes note of the decision of the JEMB to hold parliamentary elections in April 2005. The Council understands that technical and logistical reasons made it impossible, as reported by the Secretariat, to hold simultaneous presidential and parliamentary elections by September of this year. The Council stresses the importance of using the remaining months to ensure that the necessary preparations are completed and the conditions met for free and fair elections according to the JEMB's timetables.

"The Council calls upon the Afghan Government and the international community to maintain and intensify, ahead of the Presidential and Parliamentary elections, their efforts to strengthen the national army and national police, to accelerate the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process, and to support the Afghan Government in its strategy to eliminate opium production. The Council stresses the importance of accelerated progress on DDR in order to create a safer environment for the election process, including security for electoral staff and Afghan voters, to help ensure a free and credible outcome to the electoral process, and otherwise to help create a secure environment in which the rule of law is respected. The Council reiterates its call upon all eligible Afghans to fully participate in the registration and electoral processes for the Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

"The Security Council encourages Afghan authorities to enable an electoral process to provide for voter participation that is representative of the national demographics including women and refugees and, in this regard, calls for the determination of practical modalities for the registration and

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participation of the Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan in the ongoing Afghan electoral process.

"The Council acknowledges the commitment by NATO, Operation Enduring Freedom and member states to assist in establishing a secure environment for the conduct of elections and calls upon the international community to further increase its security assistance to Afghanistan. The Council also acknowledges the intention of the EU and bilateral donors to contribute to the conduct of free and fair elections and notes ongoing discussions within the OSCE on a possible contribution in that context.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of providing the necessary funding for the timely implementation of the JEMB's timetables. It acknowledges the contribution of the international donor community in support of the elections, calls upon donors to implement their pledges and encourages the international community to consider further commitments to meet the costs for elections as inclusive as possible.

"The Security Council reaffirms its full support for the SRSG and UNAMA and reiterates the central and impartial role of the United Nations in the international efforts to assist the Afghan people in consolidating peace in Afghanistan and rebuilding their country.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."